

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SUVA 01571 282224Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY SUVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7825
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDIP, ETRD
SUBJECT: UK HIGH COMMISSIONER PROTESTS STATEMENTS BY PRC
AMBASSADOR

1. AT OPENING CEREMONY OF PRC COMMERCIAL EXHIBIT IN
SUVA (21 AUGUST) ATTENDED BY BOTH GOVERNOR-GENERAL
AND PRIME MINISTER, (SEPTTEL) HEAD OF PRC TRADE DELEGATION
DID NOT FAIL TO RESORT IN HIS SPEECH TO STEREOTYPE REFERENCES
TO COLONIAL EXPLOITATION, TO FIJIAN PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE
AGAINST IT AND RESULTING SOLIDARITY BETWEEN PRC AND FIJI.
UK HIGH COMMISSIONER WAS ANNOYED BY THESE REMARKS AND
DECIDED TO REACT BY SENDING A MEMBER OF HIS STAFF THE
FOLLOWING DAY TO CALL ON THE PRC EMBASSY. HIS INSTRUCTIONS
WERE TO ASK FOR A COPY OF THE SPEECH AND IN THE PRESENCE
OF AMBASSADOR MI READ THE PERTINENT PHRASES AND CALL
ATTENTION TO THEM WITH THE COMMENT THAT THEY ARE "IN-
CONSISTENT WITH THE EXISTING FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN
OUR TWO COUNTRIES." AMBASSADOR MI GOT THE POINT, BECAME
EVEN MORE AFFABLE AND AMIABLE THAN BEFORE AND TRIED
ONLY TO HUMOR HIS VISITOR BY SUGGESTING THAT HE
WAS NOT SURPRISED TO RECEIVE THE UK PROTEST.

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PAGE 02 SUVA 01571 282224Z

3. UK HIGH COMMISSIONER ADVISED FIJI'S DEPARTMENT OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF WHAT HE WAS DOING AND SUGGESTED THAT
GOF TAKE SIMILAR ACTION TO LET THE PRC OFFICIALS KNOW
PRIVATELY THAT THEY DID NOT APPRECIATE THIS KIND OF
REMARKS ABOUT THE PAST AND PRESENT RELATIONS BETWEEN UK
AND FIJI. GOF HEEDED THE ADVICE AND MADE REPRESENTATIONS
TO PRC EMBASSY.

4. UK HIGH COMMISSIONER TOLD AMBASSADOR CONDON THAT SEVERAL GOF OFFICIALS COMMENTED ON THE PRC STATEMENTS AND WONDERED WHY HE DID NOT WALK OUT OF THE CEREMONY. HICOM'S COMMENT WAS THAT HE WOULD BE LOATHE TO IMITATE THE SOVIETS IN ANY WAY WHATSOEVER AND THAT HIS PRIVATE REACTION STANDS A BETTER CHANCE OF MAKING A POINT THAN PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS OF DISPLEASURE.

5. SO AS NOT TO LOSE PERSPECTIVE OF THINGS HICOM COMMENTED TO AMBASSADOR CONDON THAT "FOR ONE SOLID DAY PRC AND UK RELATIONS WERE STRAINED."

6. INCIDENTALLY, AMBASSADOR MI, JUST BACK FROM TWO MONTH VACATION, AND HIS STAFF WERE PARTICULARLY FRIENDLY TOWARDS AMBASSADOR CONDON AND HIS WIFE AND THROUGH THE INTERPRETER MADE IT A POINT TO SAY THAT HE WILL BE ASKING FOR AN APPOINTMENT. AMBASSADOR CONDON ASSURED HIM THAT THIS CAN BE EASILY ARRANGED ADDING THAT HE HAD BEEN THINKING THAT "WE SHOULD BE HAVING A MEAL TOGETHER. AMBASSADOR MI SEEMED EAGER TO CONVEY AGREEMENT. STILLMAN

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